

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CURACA 00587 041852Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
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FM AMCONSUL CURACAO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3454
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, NA
SUBJECT: ARUBAN INDEPENDENCE

REF: CURACAO 0579

BEGIN SUMMARY: ARUBAN INDEPENDENCE DEMONSTRATION DRAWS 2500
ATTENDEES. SPEECHES DEMANDED ARUBAN INDEPENDENCE AND WERE
DIRECTED AGAINST KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, THE GNA, AND THE
PPA (PARTIDO PATRIOTICA ARUBANA). RALLY WAS WELL ORGANIZED
AND HELD WITHOUT POLICE COOPERATION. PLEAS FOR RESTRAINT
AND SELF-DISCIPLINE WERE INTERMINGLED WITH CALLS FOR "MAXIMUM
SACRIFICE" TO OBTAIN INDEPENDENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. DEMONSTRATION CALLED BY ARUBAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT
LEADER BETICO CROES AT 9 A.M. AUGUST 2, WAS HELD IN FRONT OF
ISLAND GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN CENTER OF ARUBAN CAPITAL,
ORANJESTAD. WELL-DISCIPLINED CROWD NUMBERED ABOUT 2500
PERSONS, ABOUT 4.5 PERCENT OF ARUBAN POPULATION.
SINCE MANY
BUSINESSES AND MOST GOVERNMENT WORK WAS SUSPENDED DURING TWO-HOUR
EVENT, CROWD WAS PRIMARILY MADE UP OF WORKING AGE MALES.

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MANY WORE HARDHATS. OBVIOUSBY ITS ABSENCE WAS PARTICIPATION
OF ARUBAN BLACK POPULATION - ELOQUENT TESTIMONY TO UNDERLYING
RACISM IN CROES' AND MEP'S ANTIPATHY TOWARD CURACAO. ANOTHER
GROUP WHOSE ABSENCE WAS WELL NOTED BY THE VARIOUS SPEAKERS WAS
THE ARUBAN POLICE FORCE WHO DIDN'T EVEN ASSIST WITH TRAFFIC
CONTROL. ACCORDING TO POLICE COMMISSENER OLDENBOOM, POLICE
WERE IN FACT ON SCENE IN PLAIN CLOTHES, AND UNIFORMED POLICE

WERE COLLECTED IN NEARBY POLICE STATION IN CASE OF EMERGENCY.

2. RALLY WAS WELL ORGANIZED WITH MANY PLACARDS AND ARUBAN FLAGS PRESENT. THESE WERE COLLECTED JUST BEFORE END OF THE LAST SPEECH. NO ANTILLEAN FLAGS WERE SEEN ON ANY GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS OR IN TOWN. DURING LENGTHY ADDRESSES CROWD RESPONDED WITH POLITE BUT LUKEWARM APPLAUSE. EVEN CROES, AN EXCELLENT ORATOR, ONLY RECEIVED MODEST CROWD REACTIONS TO HIS FIERY SPEECH. A POSSIBLE REASON FOR THIS MAY HAVE BEEN THAT CROWD WAS MULLING OVER CHALLENGE OF WATTY VOS, A FORMER CROES SUPPORTER, WHO HAS CALLED ON CROES TO EXPLAIN TO PEOPLE EXACTLY WHERE CROES' POLICIES AND ACTIONS ARE LEADING THEM.

3. IT WAS ALSO REPORTED TO CONOFF ON SCENE THAT MANY ARUBANS DEBATED WHETHER IT WAS BETTER TO BE SEEN OR NOT TO BE SEEN AT RALLY. FEAR WAS EXPRESSED BY SOME OF POSSIBLE RETALIATIONS REGARDLESS OF WHICH PATH WAS CHOSEN. MANY BUSINESSES -- BUT NOT THE TOURIST INDUSTRIES -- CLOSED FOR MEETING.

4. TARGETS OF SPEECHES CONTINUED TO BE HOLLAND. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT (READ CURACAO) AND PPA, BUT NOT NECESSARILY IN THAT ORDER. IT WAS REPEATEDLY STRESSED THAT MAJORITY OF ARUBANS WOULD NOT BE REPRESENTED IN PROPOSED NEW GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH SEVERAL SPEAKERS STRESSED NON-VIOLENCE AND SELF-DISCIPLINE, CROES CALLED FOR SELF-SACRIFICE INCLUDING "MAXIMUM SACRIFICE"

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5. BETICO CROES HAS REPORTEDLY CONFIDED TO SOME BUSINESS-MEN THAT HE IS GOVERNMENT OF ARUBA AND WHAT HE SAYS GOES. SAME SOURCES POINTED OUT THAT CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS ARE JUST WAITING TO GET SOMETHING ON CROES SO THAT HE CAN BE ARRESTED.
PENBERTHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Expiration:
Film Number: D770280-0002
Format: TEL
From: CURACAO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation History:
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